

watching, it was suggested to me that figures of these same, though not new to entomologists, might nevertheless be desirable to those interested in the subject. In the Plate each figure is considerably enlarged, but the actual dimension is expressed by scale alongside.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE XVII.

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| Fig. 1. <i>Polyergus rufescens</i> . | Fig. 4. <i>Atta barbara</i> (worker major). |
| 2. <i>Formica sanguinea</i> . | 5. Do. (worker minor) |
| 3. — <i>fusca</i> . | 6. <i>Strongylognathus testaceus</i> . |

Description of a new Genus and Species of Phoridæ parasitic on Ants. By G. H. VERRAL, Esq., Memb. Entom. Soc. Communicated by Sir JOHN LUBBOCK, Bart., F.L.S., &c.

[Read February 1, 1877.]

THROUGH my friend Mr. Frederick Smith, of the British Museum, Sir John Lubbock has kindly forwarded for my examination and determination certain specimens of Dipterous insects said to have been found parasitic on species of ants, which latter he has been studying with care as to their habits. Having given considerable attention to the family Phoridæ, I was agreeably surprised to find the parasitic specimens to be forms new to science. One of these is a new species of the genus *Phora*; the other I regard as possessing characters *sui generis*, and hence define it under the generic title *Platyphora*, at the same time bestowing on the species the name of the discoverer, who worthily pursues entomological researches, spite of many pressing public engagements.

The subjoined descriptions embrace the diagnostic peculiarities of the insects in question.

PHORA FORMICARUM, n. sp. Nigro-cinerea, fronte setosa, caniculata; antennis mediocribus, cinereis; palpis magnis, flavis; halteribus flavidis; pedibus totis pallide flavis, inermibus, tibiis intermediis unicalcaratis, posticis modice dilatatis; alis subhyalinis, nervo secundo simplici, nervulis vix undulatis. Long. vix $\frac{1}{2}$ lin.

Frons broad, grey, bristly, two large bristles being close to the eye-margin; down the centre is a deep impressed channel, which at its lower

end joins a channel above the antennæ, and at its upper end a channel round the raised vertical triangle; the space between these two latter channels (comprising the true *frons*) is about once and a half broader than deep; on the vertical triangle are two bristles; the third joint of the antennæ is moderately large, ovate, grey; the arista short, somewhat yellowish, almost naked; the palpi conspicuous, all pale yellow, with a few short black bristles at the tip; on the cheeks are some short black bristles.

The thorax is grey or brownish grey, broad, not much arched, the disk being nearly flat, and on the hinder part absolutely concave; on the disk there are no long bristles, but a dense clothing of rather short, black bristles; along the side of the thorax between the humeri, the base of the wing, and the scutellum are some long black bristles, and two on the thorax just before the scutellum; on each side of the scutellum are two long bristles; halteres dirty pale yellow; abdomen bare, dull black, with slightly yellowish incisures; ovipositor polished black, long, slightly incurved and grooved.

Legs pale yellow, including the coxæ, clothed with minute black bristles; all the coxæ with two or three black bristles at the tips, the legs otherwise bare excepting the spurs; femora flattened and widened, especially the hind pair, the hind tibiæ also slightly flattened and widened on the apical half; middle tibiæ with a long spur inside at the tip, and hind tibiæ with a small one inside and a very minute one outside; tarsi longer than the tibiæ, joints gradually diminishing in length.

Wings very slightly smoky, broad; second thick vein not extending half the length of the wing, thickened, but not forked at its tip; first veinlet with a steady curve; second very slightly curved at base, otherwise straight; third very slightly undulated; fourth hardly visible at base, evident towards tip, very slightly undulated; costa bristly up to end of second thick vein.

This species is readily distinguished by its simple second thick vein, channelled frons, small size, and by the absence of bristles on the tibiæ.

It is parasitic on *Lasius niger*.

PLATYPHORA, n. gen.

Lata, plana, tota absque setis. Frons latissima. Thorax transversus. Abdomen parvus. Alarum vena cubitalis simplex, subcostali parallela; venulæ undulatæ; costa ad basin subciliata.

Distinguished from all the existing genera of Phoridæ by its flat and broad shape, which resembles that of the small species of *Sphærocera*. The absence of strong bristles on the frons, thorax,

and legs also distinguishes it from all the genera except *Gymnophora*, which, however, is of the usual arched *Phora*-shape and has the cubital vein forked, costa bare, &c.

PLATYPHORA LUBBOCKII. Nigra, nitida; abdomine triangulari, segmento tertio parvo; femoribus posticis basi flavidis; alis apice latis, flavido-hyalinis, costa ad basin subciliata, vena cubitali ad medium costæ extensa subcostali parallela, venulis undulatis. Long. $\frac{3}{4}$ lin.

Broad, flat, shining; frons very broad, the eyes scarcely occupying each one sixth the width of the head; it is moderately shining, gently arched, and pretty densely clothed with minute bristles; the three ocelli visible slightly luteous; antennæ with the third joint rather large, somewhat rounded; thorax broad, flat, rather broader than the head, angles tolerably rounded, disk shining (in appearance suggesting a small *Sphærocera*), beset with very minute bristles, which become rather scarcer towards the hinder part; scutellum rather dull, margined, nearly four times as broad as long; abdomen black, narrower and shorter than the thorax (again suggestive of *Sphærocera*); each segment after the second successively narrower, the last one being almost triangular; the third segment is very short, contracted under the second; the hind margins form a curve convex towards the thorax, the first segment being slightly emarginate in the middle; the sixth (last) is much the longest. Legs stoutish, blackish, basal two thirds of hind femora yellowish; middle tibiæ with two small spines at the tip. Wings considerably overlapping the abdomen, yellowish hyaline, darker about the basal half of the costa, blunt at the tip, cubital vein extending about half the length of the wing, and the costa slightly ciliate up to its end, subcostal vein running parallel to it and ending just before it; both veins a little thickened at their ends; first veinlet curved S-like, considerably at its base, slightly at its end, vanishing distinctly before the tip of the wing; second veinlet also S-like, diverging at its end from the first, and ending distinctly below the tip of the wing; third veinlet slightly undulated, ending very wide from the second; fourth faint, not reaching the end of the wing.

This description having been made from a specimen gummed down on card, though in very good condition, I am unable to decide on the sex, or to examine the face, palpi, base of antennæ, or coxæ.